Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 SY-05 MCT-01 /096 W
----------102166 210905Z /17
R 191505Z APR 78
FM AMCONSUL KADUNA
TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMCONSUL IBADAN
SECSTATE WASHDC 3968

C O N F I D E N T I A L KADUNA 0500

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PDEV, NI
SUBJECT: SHARIA CONTROVERSY

REF: LAGOS 4905

1. YESTERDAY'S NORTHERN STATEMENT AT CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY REPRESENTS CONSIDERABLE ESCALATION OF ISSUE AND ILLUSTRATES VIVIDLY CONFRONTATIONAL NATURE OF POLITICS IN NIGERIA. IT SHOULD CERTAINLY GIVE PAUSE TO THOSE CA MEMBERS WHO INITIALLY TOOK NORTHERN WALKOUT LIGHTLY.

2. IT UNCLEAR EXACTLY WHY NORTHERN MEMBERS HAVE DECIDED GO THIS FAR. FOLLOWING PRESENT THEMSELVES AS POSSIBLE RATIONALES IN THEMSELVES OR IN COMBINATION. (A) ANGER AT BUSINESS-AS-USUAL ATTITUDE OF NON-NORTHERN CA MEMBERS AFTER WALKOUT; (B) BELIEF THAT CONTINUATION OF BOYCOTT WOULD FORCE "RUMP" CA TO REOPEN SHARIA QUESTION; (C) BELIEF THAT CONTINUATION OF WALKOUT WOULD FORCE SMC TO TAKE HAND IN GAME (I.E. OBASANJO SPEECH TO ASSEMBLY); (D) FEAR THAT LACK OF FIRM RESPONSE TO FIRST "POLITICAL" ISSUE OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE TO NORTH IN PROCESS OF RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE
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WOULD ERODE REGION'S POLITICAL POSITION. WHATEVER WAS CAUSE OR CAUSES FOR NORTH'S ACTION, IF SITUATION NOT RESOLVED SOON IT APPEARS TO ME THAT AT MINIMUM CONSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS WILL BE SERIOUSLY RETARDED. AT MAXIMUM, MILITARY MAY GO BACK ON 1979 SCHEDULE FOR RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE.

3. WE HAVE PICKED UP SOME RUMORS FROM SOURCES OF UNKNOWN

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RELIABILITY THAT THERE ARE PLANS ON PART OF ISLAMIC YOUTH
ORGANIZATIONS FOR POSSIBLY VIOLENT PRO-SHARIA DEMONSTRATIONS
THIS FRIDAY (MOSQUE DAY) OR NEXT WEEK. PO CALLED ON ACTING
KADUNA STATE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE MUSA THIS MORNING AND
ENQUIRED ABOUT RUMORS USING AS RATIONALE CONCERN ABOUT EXPOSURE
OF CONSULATE'S NIGERIAN STAFF IN CITY CENTER IN EVENT DEMON-
STRATIONS TOOK PLACE. MUSA, WHO APPEARED RESPOND CANDIDLY,
SAID POLICE HAD BEEN FOREWARNED OF RECENT GENERALLY PEACEFUL
DEMONSTRATIONS IN KADUNA, ZARIA AND FUNTUA. SAID THERE HAD
BEEN SOME STONE THROWING IN ZARIA AND THAT POLICE WERE
INVESTIGATING WITH VIEW TO MAKING ARRESTS. MUSA SAID THAT
HE HAD NO INFORMATION ABOUT PLANNED DEMONSTRATIONS FOR
THIS OR NEXT WEEK AND THAT LEADERS OF ISLAMRIC ORGANIZATIONS
ALL OVER NORTH HAD BEEN CONTACTED BY SENIOR GOVERNMENT
OFFICIALS AND "ENCOURAGED" TO KEEP THINGS COOL. HE
PROMISED ADVISE PO IF SITUATION CHANGED.
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